

REMARKS

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the subject application. The final Office Action of December 17, 2003 has been received and contents carefully reviewed.

Claims 1-20 are currently pending in the present application. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application are respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-15 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Woodgate et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,055,103) in view of Faris et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002059013), Fujii et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,243,146) and Seiberle (U.S. Patent No. 6,496,239). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claim 1 is allowable over the cited references in that claim 1 recites a combination of elements including, for example, “wherein the liquid crystal polymer is divided into first regions and second regions by irradiating a light, and wherein the first regions have a first twist angle and the second regions have a second twist angle, the first twist angle being different from the second twist angle...” None of the cited references, singly or in combination, teaches or suggests at least this feature of the claimed invention.

Applicant respectfully submits that “the twist angle of the liquid crystal polymer is controlled by a photochemical mechanism of the chiral dopant” in the instant application. See paragraph [0046] of the present application. In contrast, UV light is exposed to the alignment layer and then liquid crystal is filled in the cell in Faris et al. See, for example, paragraphs [0091] – [0094]. Moreover, the twist angles of the optical rotatory device in Fuji et al. is determined by an alignment treatment and UV light is irradiated “so as to polymerize and cure the polymerized liquid crystal.” See col. 12, line 63 – col. 13, line 10. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 and claims 2-7 and 19, which depend therefrom, are allowable over the cited references.

Claim 8 is allowable over the cited references in that claim 8 recites a combination of elements including, for example, “forming a liquid crystal polymer having a chiral dopant and liquid crystal molecules on the second polarizer, wherein forming the liquid crystal polymer further comprises, forming a plurality of first and second regions in the liquid crystal polymer by

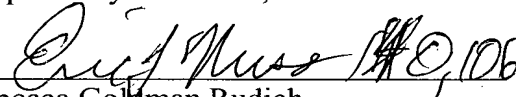
irradiating a light using a mask, wherein the first regions have a first twist angle and the second regions have a second twist angle, the first twist angle being different from the second twist angle; forming a third polarizer on the liquid crystal polymer." None of the cited references, singly or in combination, teaches or suggests at least this feature of the claimed invention. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 8 and claims 9-15 and 20, which depend therefrom, are allowable over the cited references.

Applicant believes the foregoing amendments place the application in condition for allowance and early, favorable action is respectfully solicited. If the Examiner deems that a telephone conference would further the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at the telephone number (202) 496 - 7500. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. §1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911.

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Respectfully submitted,

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